

Members Quarterly

Fall 2015 Edition

Perspective

Good Old Voicemail

Is it still valid today?

We've recently read that voicemail is being phased out by a number of organizations. Apparently, the younger generations don't like it and would rather use text or email on their personal cellphones as their preferred methods of communication.

Our organization is a proud supporter of voicemail. In these economic times of "doing more with less", most companies have done away with receptionists. We have followed the pack on that too.

In my opinion, voicemail is one of the best technological improvements to date- if used wisely. I am not a believer in the automated attendant that involves searching and spelling names looking for extensions, pressing "#" or "0" to reach no one but the original recording. Voicemail still remains an excellent way to get your specific message across in minimal time.

Certain organizations prefer their employees to use text or email on their personal devices- "instant communication". Are those the same organizations that don't wish their employees to work outside of normal business hours? Some people have become so obsessed with messaging that they pull over to the side of the road whenever the message alert beeps. Not only is this ridiculous, but it is dangerous. Texting and driving just don't mix well together.

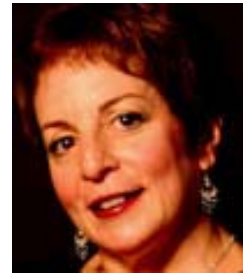
With voicemail at IPM, we don't use various extensions for staff members. There are usually only one or two people who handle the calls. If they are not available, voicemail kicks in. A brief message containing useful information is provided as well as the option of leaving your message. You don't have to search through a directory or push twenty buttons. Voicemail is checked frequently and calls are returned promptly.

Email is definitely an excellent communication tool. Most of us use it effectively and put our queries into the message. The recipients know exactly what the senders want and respond accurately and quickly.

I have to wonder about which generations send emails with no information but a request to be phoned providing a phone number. You phone them back. Go figure that they are not at their desk and you get their voicemail. This game of telephone tag can continue for hours and days. How productive is that?

As much as I enjoy chatting live on the phone, I understand that people are exceptionally busy these days. While I use email constantly and phone when the problem is urgent, I am not that strong a supporter of texting as I find it an annoying interruption in many instances. Have you ever sat at a meeting or even chatted with colleagues during a break and have the others busy messaging? Am I the only person to find this rude?

I've always been a fan of voicemail and will continue to do so. Emails are great too. I'm not a fan of texting, but I realize it has its place. For that matter, we handle so many calls per day at work, why would we want to take business calls on our personal devices after hours? Some may



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consider me old-fashioned, but it's whatever works for you.

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